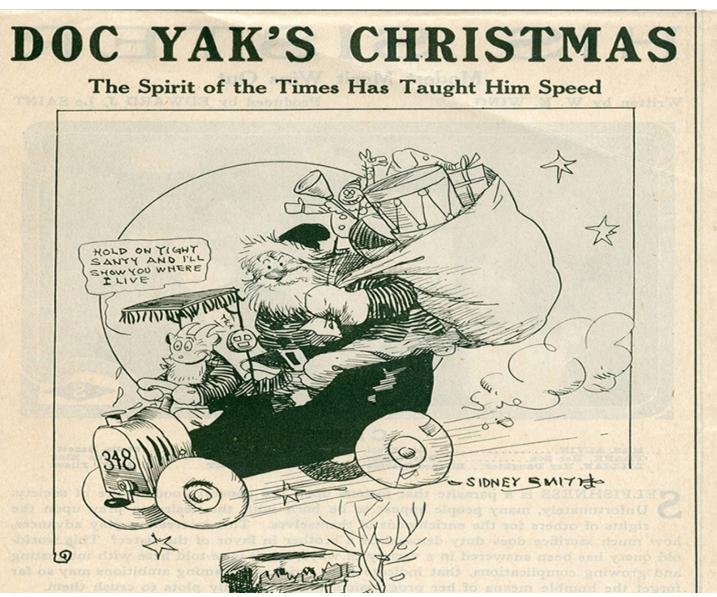


C. Mice ©2022 some images attributable to vecteezy.com





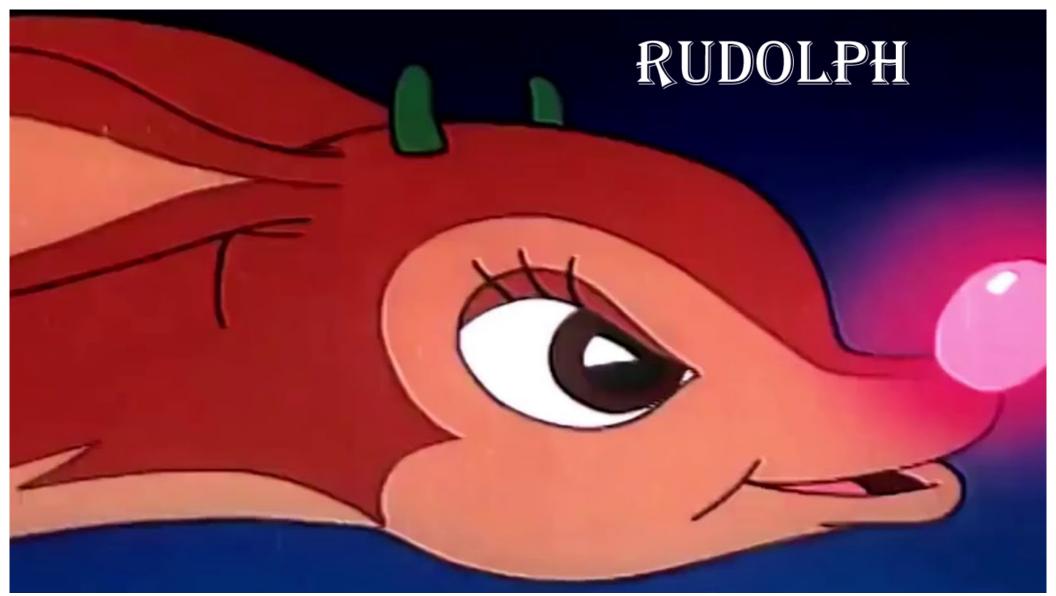
Day Sixteen is a usual day of work for the elves. At night, they watch their favorite Christmas videos. They also have hot cocoa and order cranberry pizza from Jack Frost's Pizzeria. He owns both the local bowling alley and the pizzeria.



Elf TV has all the classics, from early cartoons to the newest movies. The elves especially love the old cartoons and they can stream them on demand. They've been doing that since 1913 when the first Christmas cartoon was made. That was Doc Yak's Christmas. Doc Yak was also a comic strip in the newspapers.



Since then so many Christmas cartoons and movies have been made. Christmas comes but once a year from 1936 with Grampy is an elf favorite. He is so funny and shows how kind he is by making toys for all the orphans. Santa thinks Grampy is the best. The elves are so impressed with the ingenuity Grampy uses to make toys out of everyday things. That is my favorite Christmas cartoon.



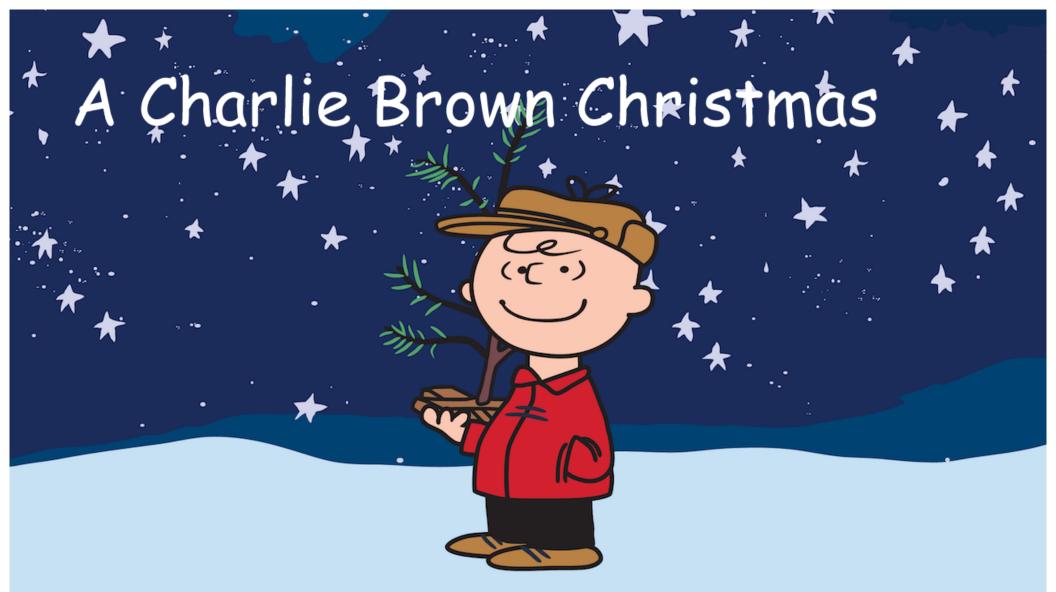
In 1948, the Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer cartoon was made. It is a classic and based on the characters created by Robert L. May in 1939. The reindeer are still waiting for Rudolph to arrive. Some think he may come in 2034 to join the North Pole reindeer. It has something to do with legal matters.



In 1962, Mr. Magoo was Ebeneezer Scrooge in A Christmas Carol, originally written by Charles Dickens back in 1843. Mr. Magoo is such a good actor and the songs in the cartoon are wonderful. I highly recommend you watch it.



In 1964, a longer Rudolph cartoon was made. It had so many memorable songs. The elves love it because it shows them at work and one of the heroes is an elf who wants to be a dentist.



In 1965, another classic was made, A Charlie Brown Christmas. Santa likes that one because it shows Christmas is not about getting gifts and fancy trees and decorations. Every year, Santa gets a 'Charlie Brown' tree. He has the Gingerbread Man save the smallest scrawniest tree for him.



My favorite Christmas movie is *Home Alone*. Its not really about Christmas but it is similar to an event that happened here at the North Pole. Let me tell you the story of *The elfling and the goblin*.



Once, on the sixteenth day of Christmas Month, two elves were putting their elfling to bed. It was a dark and snowy night. The mother elf designed toys and the father elf made them. Since it was almost Christmas they had worked hard getting ready for Christmas Eve when all the toys would be given to kind and generous children. They said, "Good night, Dear", gave the elfling a kiss and went to bed.



In a minute, the elves were sound asleep as they were exhausted. But then, a knock came on the door. The elfling sprang out of bed to see what was the matter. She asked, "Who is it?". A squeaky voice replied, "Santa, I have a gift for you." She became suspicious.



Her mother had told her not to open the door for strangers. This 'Santa' sounded very strange. She said, "How do I know you are Santa?" The goblin did his best to imitate Santa's laugh, "Ho, Ho." The elfling thought, "Hmmm, Santa does not laugh, 'Ho Ho'. He laughs 'Ho Ho Ho'. One 'Ho' is missing".



She ran to the window and looked out. The snow had stopped and the moon lit the scene like it was midday so she could see clearly. It was a Christmas Goblin. He was trying to get in the house so he could steal any gifts that were under the tree. She yelled, "You're not Santa, Where is your red hat and coat and your beard!? And you surely don't laugh like Santa!" The goblin grumbled and wandered away.



Before she could get to bed another knock came to the door. This time she looked out the window first. It was the goblin again, dressed in a red coat and hat with a fake Santa beard. She laughed and made a plan.



She went to her room, opened the window and climbed on the roof. She rolled a big snowball to the edge of the roof. She called out, "Santa, come around back and I'll let you in." The goblin started around the side of the house and headed for the back door. And what do you think happened?



The elfling rolled the giant snowball off the roof just as the goblin came near. The snowball covered the goblin and he looked like a snowman. All you could see were his eyes. The elfling ran back in the house and went to bed.



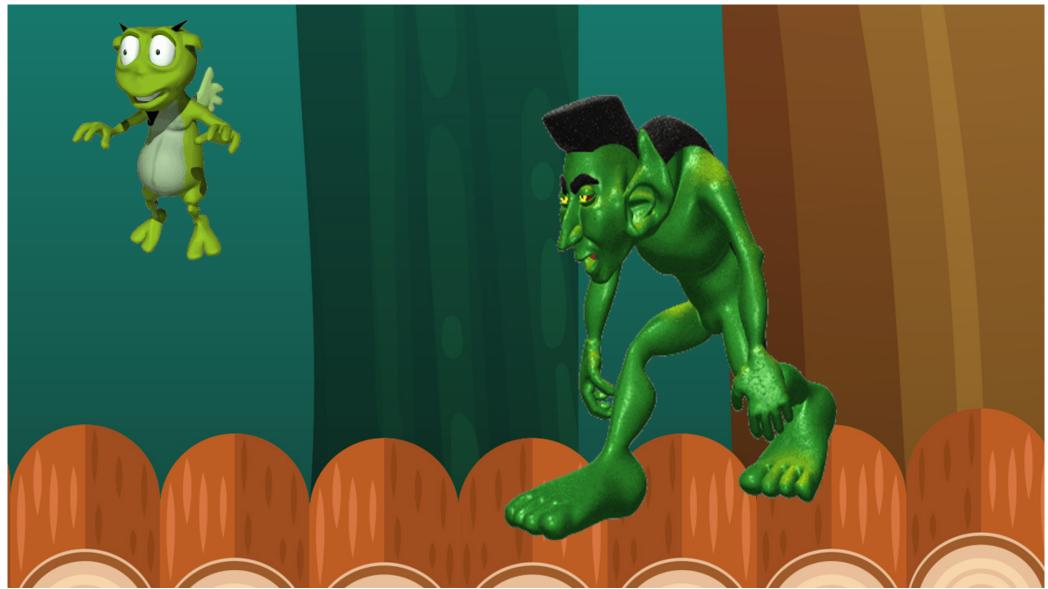
The North Wind and the Man in the Moon had been watching all this. The Man in the Moon said, "Ha, goblins are no match for elflings. Elflings are too smart."



The North Wind began to laugh. He laughed harder and harder and the wind began to blow harder and harder. The wind blew all the snow off the goblin. Then it blew all his Santa clothes and beard off too. The gust lifted him up in the air and carried him far away.



The North Wind kept laughing and soon the goblin was in the Enchanted Forest. He landed in a river near a bridge. A troll lived under the bridge.



After getting his bearings, the goblin climbed out onto the bridge. The troll climbed onto the bridge too and bellowed, "Who is that on my bridge?" The goblin took one look at the troll and flew back to the North Pole as fast as he could. Luckily for him the North Wind had stopped laughing and the wind had died down. The Moon lit his way back and chuckled at the silly goblin.



So... that is Day Sixteen. Hope you liked the story of the elfling and the goblin.



Activities

Click on "Activities" to see some classic Christmas cartoons and help the goblin get home.





Day Seventeen is cookie baking day. Christmas cookies were first made in Medieval Europe beginning about 500 AD. I visited them in 521 AD. They used spices like cinnamon and ginger and added things like almonds and dried fruit. Can you believe they even used black pepper? Wow, I'm not sure I would like that, would you?



In the 17th century the Dutch brought the Christmas cookie tradition to America. It wasn't until the 1930s that children began leaving cookies and milk for Santa.



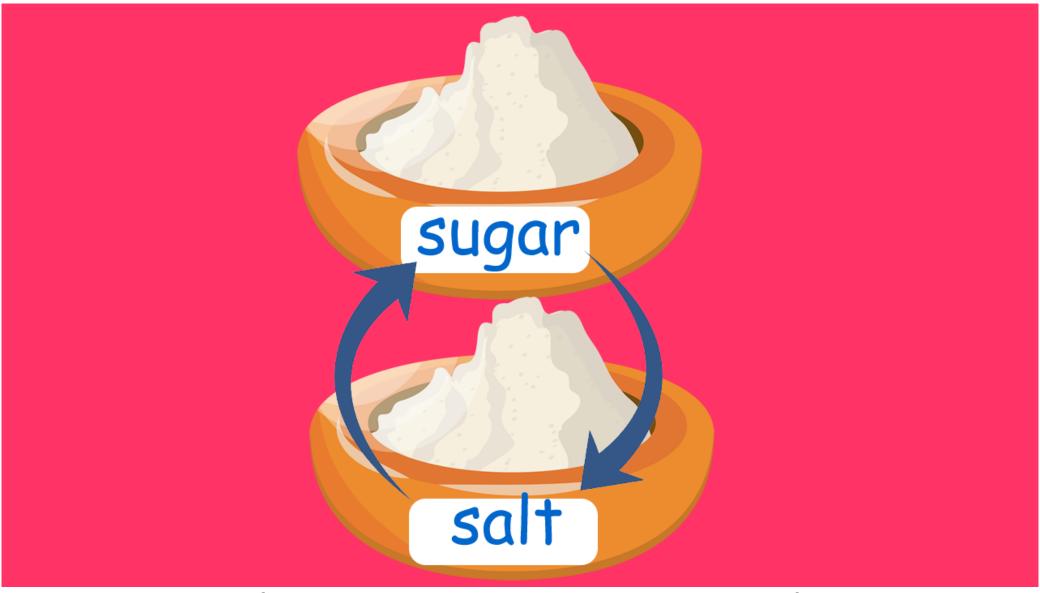
Christmas cookies are usually cut in the shape of Christmas things like reindeer, stars, Christmas trees, stockings, and even Santa. Gingerbread men and houses are especially popular.



When the elves are done baking their cookies they pack them up and bring them to friends. They enjoy sharing with others.



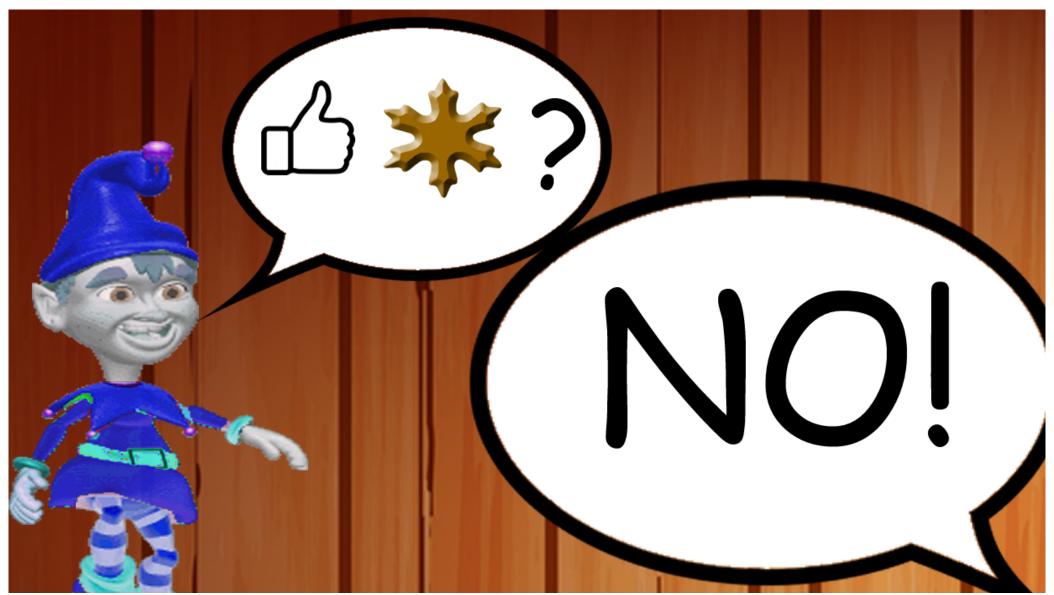
Most Christmas cookies use sugar to make them sweet. Some use honey and some use date sugar.



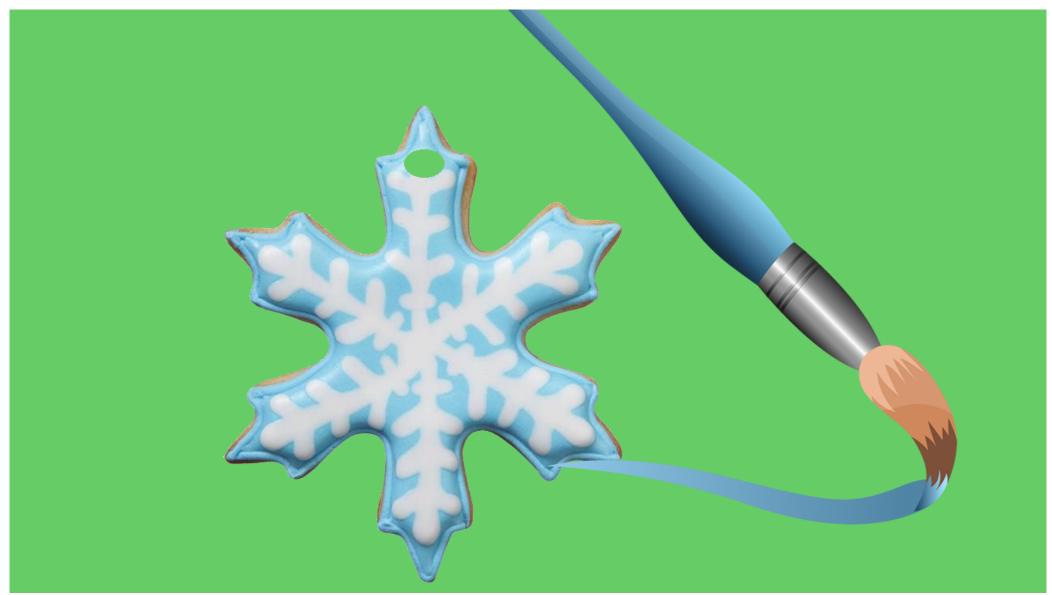
Jack thought it would be funny to switch the sugar and the salt labels in one elf house. Do you think that is funny? What will happen?



When the elves made the cookies they added a cup of salt and a teaspoon of sugar instead of the other way around. When the cookies came out of the oven and had cooled the father elf tasted one. The cookie tasted horrible! Besides tasting horrible it was hard as a rock.



Jack thought that was funny. The elves did not. Father elf yelled, "What did you do, Jack Frost!?" "I switched the sugar and salt. Don't you like the cookies?" Every elf yelled, "NO!"



A young elfling had an idea. He said. "We can use the cookies for tree ornaments!" And that is what they did. To this day the elves and people around the world make cookie dough ornaments and hang them on their trees. Jack's trick actually turned into something good.



This is also the day that the elves make cookies in the Elf Bakery to deliver to the forest animals and to all the kind and generous people around the world. The fairies bake a special cookie for the animals with no sugar and no icing. The fairies decorate the people cookies with their magic and then deliver them to people. They deliver the animal cookies to their forest friends, of course.



The fairies deliver the cookies at night. In the forest, the animals come to get a special cookie and so do the Christmas Goblins. They try to steal cookies as the fairies drop them to the animals. Jack Frost also causes trouble by throwing snowflakes at the cookies as they fall to the animals below.



When the fairies go to deliver cookies to people they put them in the Christmas stockings that are hanging up in houses. Be sure to have your stockings up if you want the fairies to leave you a cookie, if you have been kind and generous, of course. The goblins are also about, stealing cookies from stockings. I hope they don't steal any of yours.



Click on "Activities" to help the fairies make and deliver cookies and to see how to make Christmas dough ornaments.





Day Eighteen is the day that every elf makes a gingerbread house. Did you know in the 17th century only professional gingerbread bakers were allowed to bake gingerbread? Only at Christmas and Easter were others allowed to bake it.



In 2013, a group in Bryan, Texas broke the Guinness World Record by making the largest gingerbread house ever. It measured 2,520-square-feet.



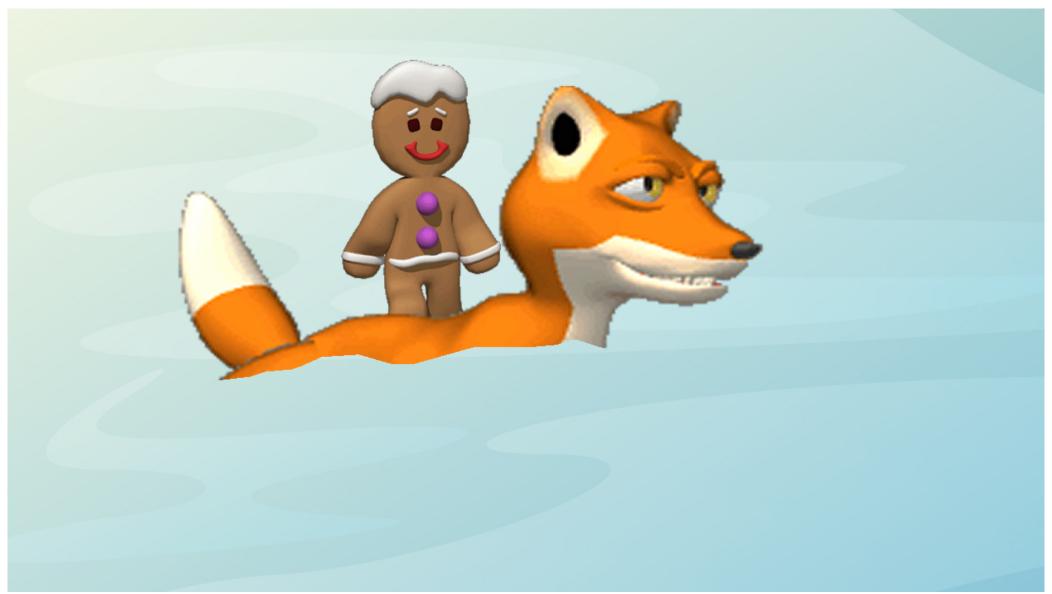
The tradition of making decorated gingerbread houses started in Germany in the early 1800s. According to certain researchers, people made them after the fairy tale *Hansel and Gretel* became popular. I have a different story to tell about why the elves make gingerbread houses.



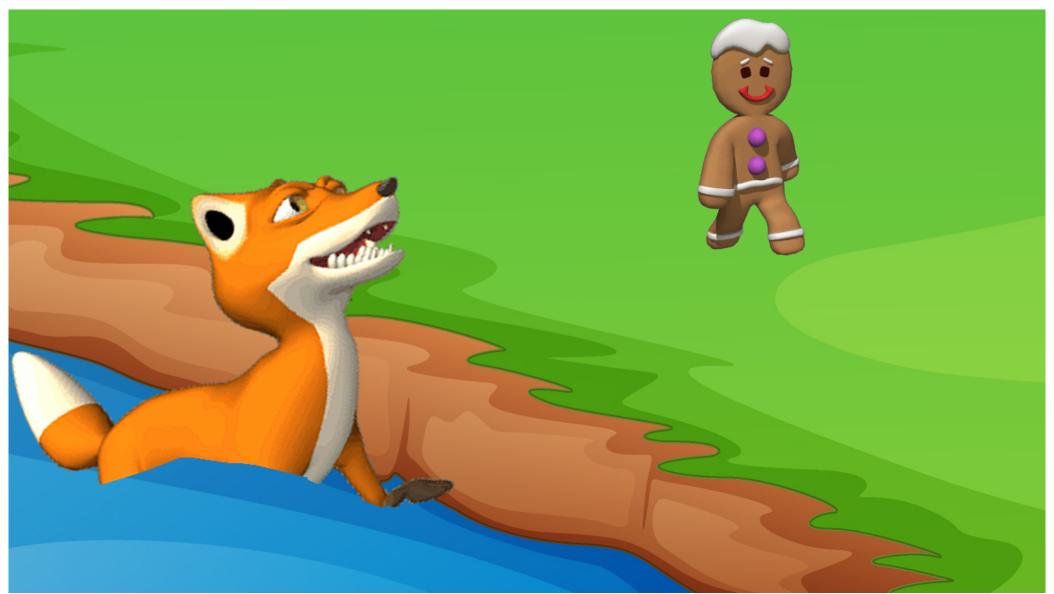
One day in the Enchanted Forest, the Gingerbread Man was out for a walk to visit some friends. When he came to the river, a sly fox, who loved the taste of gingerbread was sunning herself on the bank.



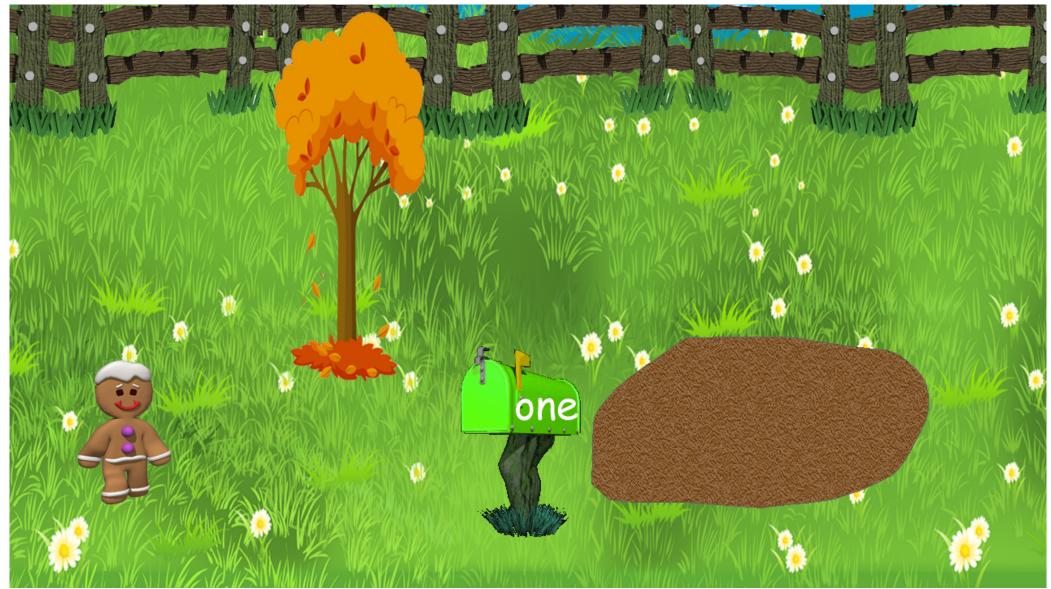
She said to the gingerbread man, "Would you like to cross the river?" He replied, "Yes, I am going to see my friends, The Three pPgs. Crossing here would save me a long walk and I would not have to cross the troll bridge. He likes to eat gingerbread." "Don't we all.", thought the fox. She said, "Hop on my back and I will swim across the river. It will save you time and you will avoid the hungry troll."



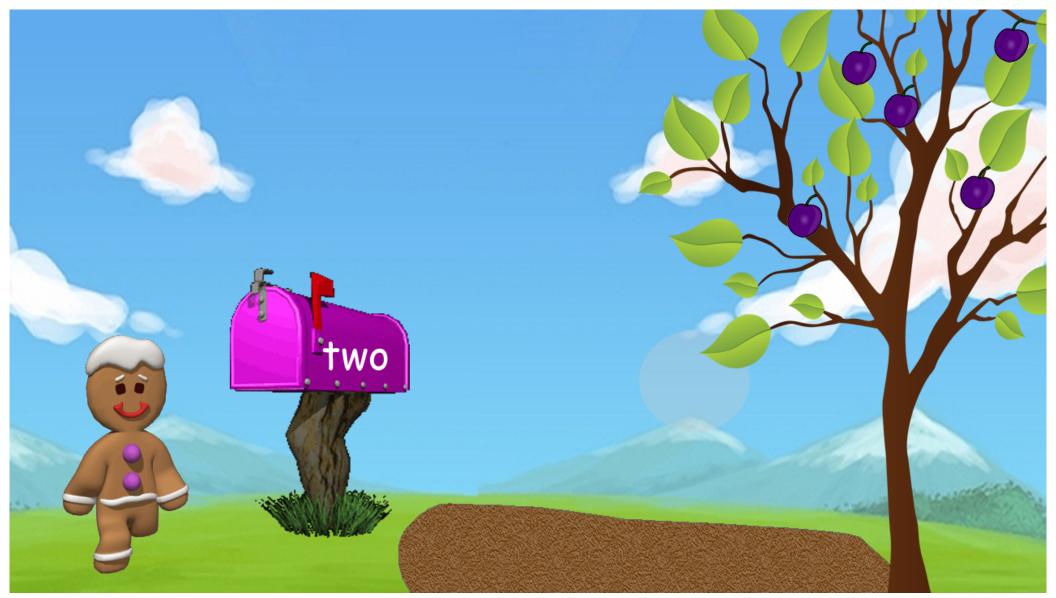
Having never seen a fox before the Gingerbread Man did not know that they can be very devious and have a taste for gingerbread. So... he hopped on the fox's back and they started across the river.



When they reached the other bank, the fox was ready for a snack. Before she could grab the Gingerbread Man he hopped over her and onto the shore, barely escaping her snapping teeth.



He went on to the first little pig's house but it was gone. Only a mailbox remained. What could have happened? Did the pig move his house?



Then he stopped at the place where the second pig's house should have been but it was gone too. Again, only a mailbox remained. He was becoming a little worried.



The Gingerbread Man went on to the third pig's brick house. Outside the door was a wolf huffing and puffing. As you know that brick house did not collapse like the other pigs' houses. The wolf turned and saw the Gingerbread Man. He said, "If I can't get dinner then I'll have some dessert."



The Gingerbread Man and the wolf passed the fox in the river and she joined in the chase. They ran over the troll bridge "Trip trap trip trap" so quickly that the troll did not have enough time to stop them or even say, "Who is that tripping over my bridge?! "He too joined the chase.



The Gingerbread Man ran into his little gingerbread house. He hid behind his bed.



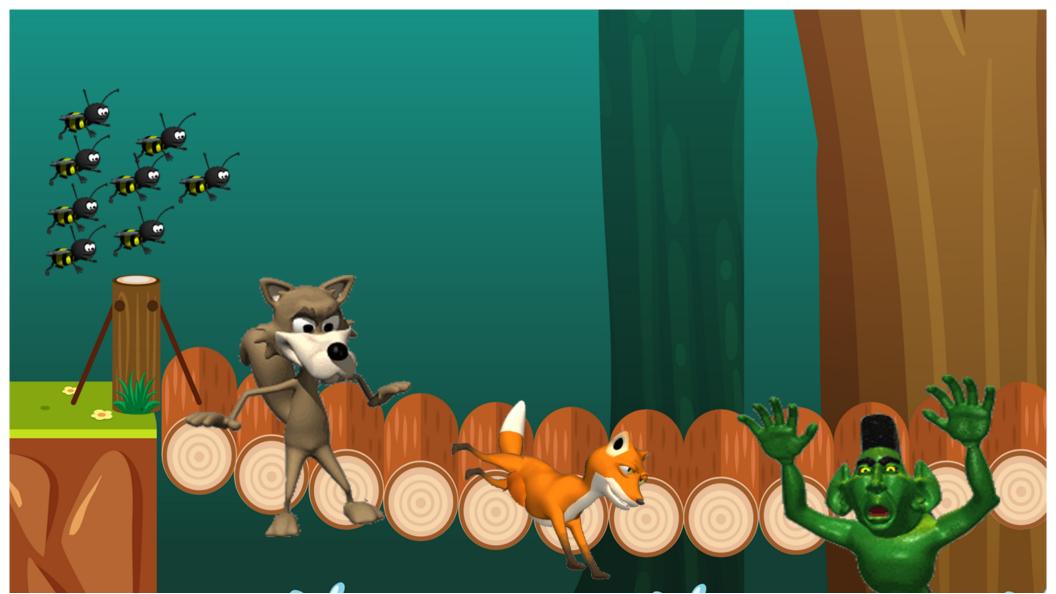
The wolf said, "I'll blow down the house and then we can eat." The fox said, "I'll trick the cookie to come outside and we can grab him." The troll said, "I'm hungry. I haven't had anything to eat for days. The goats tricked me again. Let's just eat."



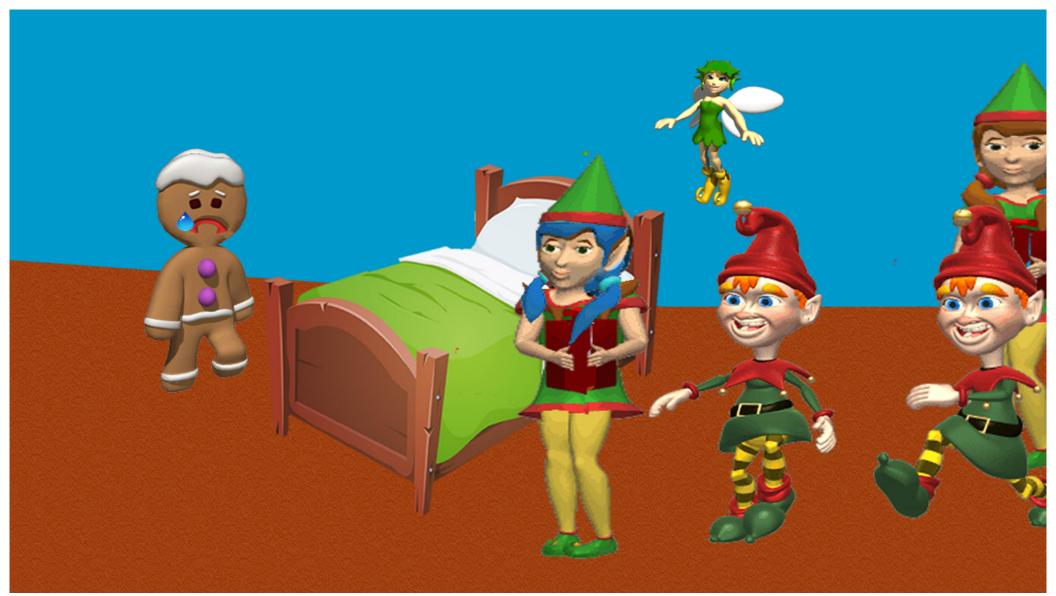
And so they began eating the gingerbread house with the Gingerbread Man inside.



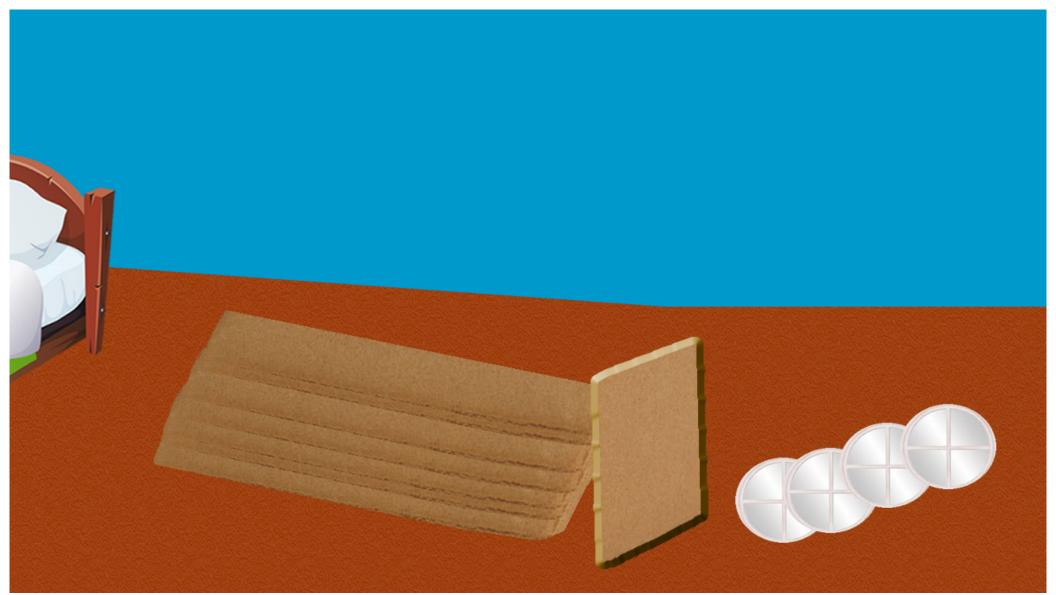
They had finished the house and were ready to eat the Gingerbread Man when the Green Fairy came along. She was taking some ElfScouts to deliver cookies to her sister, Tinkerbell.



In a wink, she waved her magic wand and a swarm of bees appeared and chased the three villains away. They ran and jumped in the river under the troll bridge.



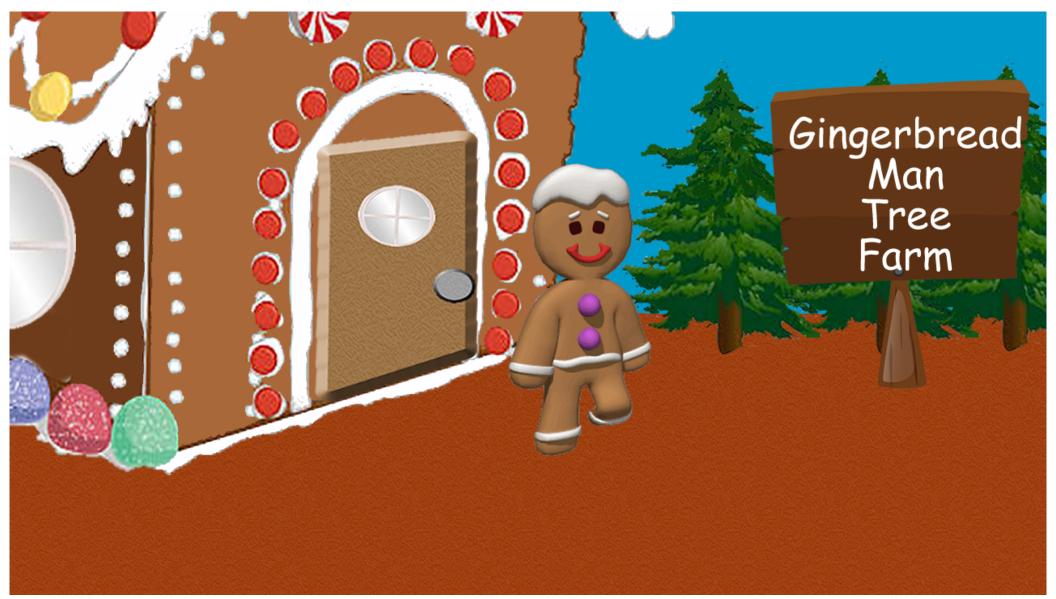
The Gingerbread Man was crying. He had no house to live in. What could he do? One ElfScout said, "We can build you a new house." Another said, "It will have cookie walls made with salt, not sugar, so it will be hard and sturdy as a rock and taste terrible so no one will try and eat it."



The fairy said, "I will quickly bake the pieces of the house for you." She waved her wand and her magic oven appeared. She added a pinch of flour, ginger, and salt then said "Oven. Bake. Now." The oven baked hard-terrible-tasting cookie boards for the walls, doors, and roof. She said, "Oven. Stop. Now." and it did then disappeared. She also made a few windows, and even a skylight, to let sunlight into the house and warm it on cold winter days.



The ElfScouts and Gingerbread Man quickly built the house. It looked fantastic but tasted terrible. The Gingerbread Man thanked them all and they continued on to visit Tinkerbell.



He decorated his house with candy and icing made with salt, not sugar. He decided to grow Christmas Trees for all the elves to decorate each Christmas. For their generosity, he would give them the trees for free. If the wolf, or fox, or troll came again, he would slam his door and call for the bees. They now lived in a hive near his house and love Christmas tree pollen. It makes the sweetest honey.



So... every year on this day the elves build gingerbread houses to commemorate the day that the Green Fairy and Elf Scouts helped the Gingerbread Man. When you build your gingerbread house remember how kind and generous they were. Maybe you can help someone someday.



Click on "Activities" to design a gingerbread house and see how some kids made them.





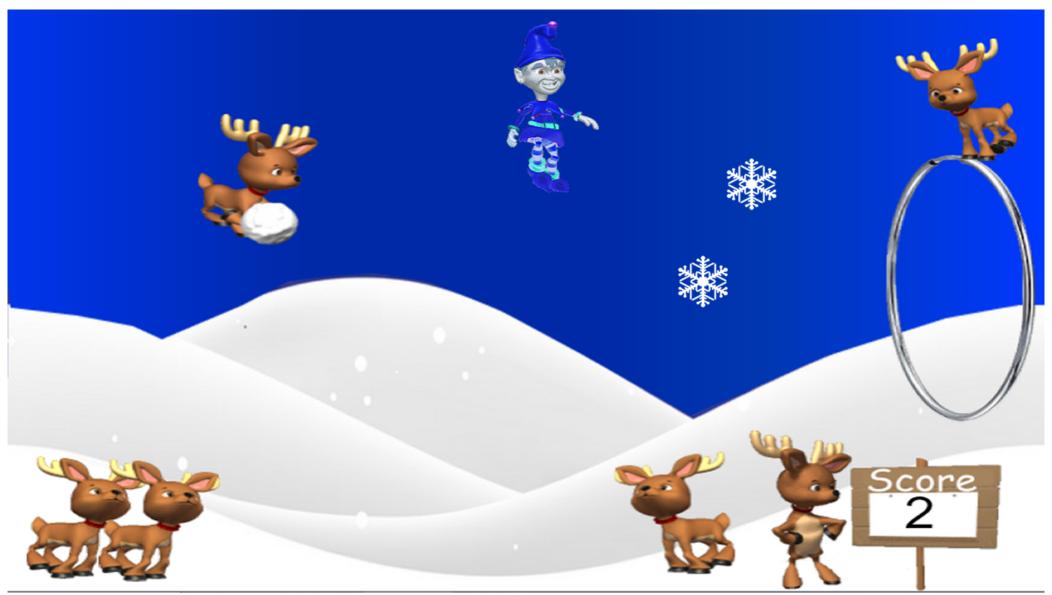
Day Nineteen is a very busy day during Christmas Month. There are reindeer games and it is Christmas Fools day. Jack Frost loves Christmas Fools Day.



The reindeer play their reindeer games. No one knows when they first started. The games are really fun, if you are a reindeer, of course. They play many running and jumping and flying games. They love to race and see who is the fastest.



But... their favorite game is Ring Ball.



In Ring Ball, one reindeer must kick a snowball through a floating ring. Another reindeer moves the ring up and down, faster and faster. Jack Frost comes and makes the game harder. He makes giant snowflakes that poof the snowballs. He laughs when that happens.



Christmas Fools Day is the day that all the elves tell Christmas jokes. Here is one. "What do three French Hens play?"

"Three French horns!"



Here is another joke.

"Why does Santa have three gardens?"

"Because he likes to "Ho Ho!"

Don't you think that is funny?!



The elves also pull Christmas Fools tricks. This is their favorite.

"Knock, Knock."

"Who's there?"

"Christmas."

"Christmas who?"

"Christmas Fools!" and then the elf outside the door runs away laughing.



Did you know on December 28, people in Mexico and Spain have a day like *Christmas Fools Day*. It is called *All Fools Day*. People that speak Spanish in South America also celebrate this day. A favorite trick is to borrow something and not give it back. You must then send the lender a basket of candy.



At night, the elves watch TV. Each elf TV has a special antenna that picks up the funniest Christmas videos from around the world. It has been a long and fun day.



Click on "Activities" to play some reindeer games, read some Christmas jokes, and see some funny Christmas videos.





Day Twenty is full of work preparing for Christmas Eve. The elves are working hard to have all the gifts ready for delivery. However, at night, every elf goes to see the annual performance of *Land of Sweets*. It is the second act from the famous ballet, *The Nutcracker*.



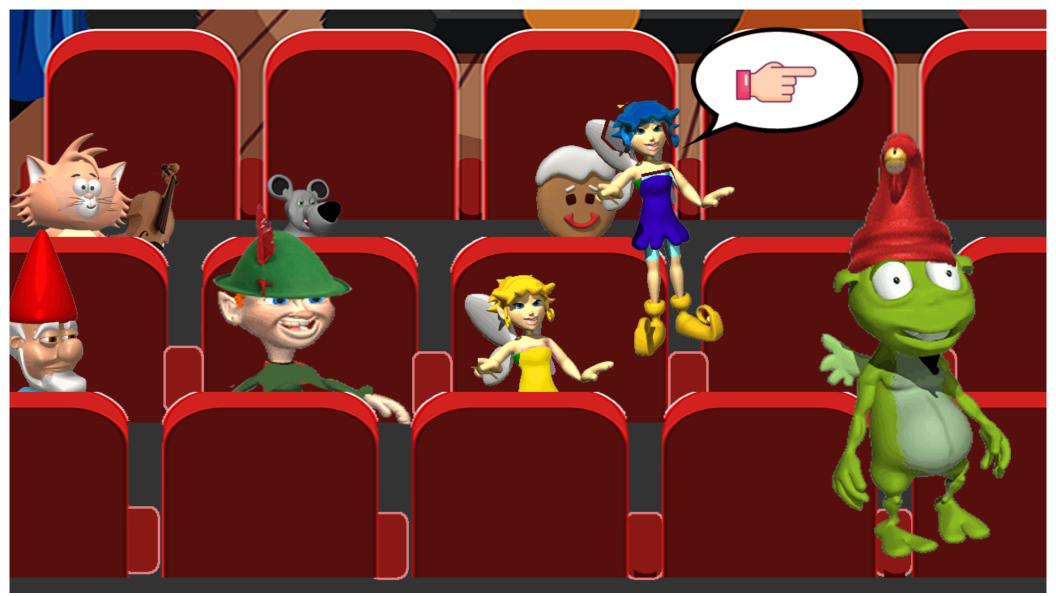
The Nutcracker ballet is based on a story by the German writer and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann, entitled The Nutcracker and the Mouse King. It was written in 1816. The music for the ballet was composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1891. He also composed the music for the ballets Swan Lake and The Sleeping Beauty. They are classics. The ballet was choreographed by Marius Petipa and the very first performance was in 1892 in Moscow, Russia.



The Pink Fairy saw that first performance and thought it was beautiful. She was so impressed with the ballerina who was a Sugar Plum Fairy. She loved all the dances in the Land of Sweets. The Sugar Plum Fairy in the ballet rules the Land of Sweets.



She came back to the North Pole and told the other fairies the entire story of the Land of Sweets and danced the different parts. Fairies, as you may know, are prima ballerinas. The fairies decided that they would create all the characters from the Land of Sweets to perform. Each year, one Sugar Plum Fairy dances the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy who rules the Land of Sweets.



The elves' friends from the Enchanted forest come to the ballet. Tinkerbell is always there because her sisters, the Sugar Plum Fairies put on the performance for all to enjoy. The Christmas Goblins try to sneak in disguised as elves. The Blue Fairy is watching for them and chases them away.



After the performance, the fairies have boxes of candy for everyone who attended. In each box are are candies that danced in the ballet. There is dark chocolate which is very healthy and candy cane peppermints. Marzipan which is a rich delicious almond treat that often looks like little fruit and sugar plums, of course are also in the box.



I love the Land of Sweets. I hope you will too. The performance is about to begin.



Click on "Activities" to help the fairies pack the treat boxes and see a performance of the Land of Sweets ballet.